

# Terry Lenamon on the Death Penalty

Sidebar with a Board Certified Expert Criminal Trial Attorney



**Terence M. Lenamon** is a Florida Bar certified expert in the area of criminal trial law. With over 17 years experience he has built a reputation as one of Florida's most respected criminal defense lawyers. His defense has been sought by many high-profile clients and has led him through 20 first-degree murder trials and eight death penalty cases. That experience has brought him national recognition as a go-to commentator on death penalty issues. He is the force behind both [deathpenaltyblog.com](http://deathpenaltyblog.com) and Florida Capital Resource Center ([floridacapitalresourcecenter.org](http://floridacapitalresourcecenter.org)), and can be reached at [terry@lenamonlaw.com](mailto:terry@lenamonlaw.com).

## [Kentucky Set to Execute Gregory Wilson on September 16: Wilson's IQ is 62 and He Had Horribly Inadequate Defense Counsel](#)

Posted on September 10, 2010 by [Terry Lenamon](#)

In Kentucky, over 22 years ago, **Gregory L. Wilson** was sentenced to death for the kidnapping, rape and murder of Deborah Pooley. A co-defendant is serving a life sentence.

Gregory Wilson should not be executed, many agree, but the grounds for stopping his execution are separate and strong: there are those arguing against Wilson's execution because of his **mental retardation**. There are others fighting against execution because of the **shoddy indigent defense** he was provided by the state of Kentucky at trial.

### ***1. Indigent Defense Crisis Never More Obvious than in Gregory Wilson's Murder Trial.***

There are lots of details surrounding the [woefully inadequate defense](#) that Mr. Wilson was provided when he was tried for murder back in 1987. In what some have labeled a "sham trial," not only did Gregory Wilson not have death-qualified counsel for his case, the state only allotted \$2500 as a fee for his legal team.

Two thousand five hundred dollars for a DEATH CASE. This is so ridiculous as to be insulting to us all. Right to counsel is a constitutional right -- and that is right to effective assistance of counsel, not just some kind of sham situation. \$2500 on its face should stop this execution.

At this point, it starts to sound like a Coen Brothers movie, but it's the total truth: the trial judge in Greg Wilson's murder trial actually stuck a note on the door to the courthouse: «PLEASE HELP. DESPERATE. THIS CASE CANNOT BE CONTINUED AGAIN.» No wonder. Where could the judge find responsible lawyers who could financially bear to take this case? Lawyers must be fiscally responsible: they have staff with salaries to pay; they have families with mortgages to meet.

Result? Two lawyers volunteered. The first, **John Foote**, had no experience in felony cases, much less murder cases, much less death penalty ones. The second, **William Hagedorn**, was pseudo-retired, gave his office number as the phone number for a local bar, and didn't bother to

show for over half the trial.

Neither defense attorney interviewed, subpoenaed, or investigated as they needed to do. Evidence that would have helped Wilson was never, ever presented to the jury. It's been [reported](#) that **Stephen Bright**, president of the Southern Center for Human Rights, views Wilson's case as one of the worst examples of inept counsel in a death case he's seen. I'm sure a lot of people agree with Mr. Bright.

## ***2. Pope Benedict XVI , Several Bishops, and Others Urge Mercy for Kentucky's Gregory L. Wilson Due to His Mental Issues.***

[Yesterday, the Pope joined](#) with several Kentucky Bishops and over 400,000 Catholics in requesting that the Governor of Kentucky use clemency power to stop the execution of Gregory Wilson. ([Read the letter to the Governor by the Pope's American representative here.](#))

It seems that Greg Wilson tests with an [IQ of 62](#), and the usual demarcation for mental retardation in the United States is 70 or below. Still, his execution has not been halted as cruel and unusual.

Meanwhile, on a challenge to the lethal injection execution method, the federal appellate court has ruled that [Mr. Wilson waited too long to bring up this issue](#). What?

Yes, the 6th Court of Appeals denied Gregory Wilson's appeal on the basis of controlling precedent regarding the execution method. Nevermind this man conceptually cannot understand the opinion that they've issued. [Read their full opinion here.](#)